

her his absolute slave/ * Macaulay implies too that after about 1687 Elizabeth Villiers ceased to have more intimate relations with William than those of intellectual companion-ship.² It is difficult to be positive on such a question, but it is reasonably certain that her husband's infidelity was a cross Mary bore until her death. One of her last acts was to ask the Archbishop of Canterbury ' to look carefully for a small scrutoir that she made use of, and to deliver it to the King/ ³ There is little doubt that the scrutoire contained ' a strong but decent admonition to the King, for some irregularity in his conduct/⁴ and that his resolution, recorded by Burnet, ' of breaking off all bad practices what-soever/ ⁵ was the result of remorse. Macaulay ignores these incidents, possibly because they conflicted with his opinion that Mary's self-abnegation ' completely gained the heart of William | Moreover no new evidence has been discovered to confirm Burnet's account of his intervention which led Mary to declare that, in the event of her becoming Queen of England, William should direct the government.⁶ Stanley, in an unpublished letter to Compton, states that Mary was ' pleased also to send for me to inform her of the affairs of England as to its constitution and government, both in Church and State, which is very fit for her to know, and yet which is but little known here/ ⁷ It

¹Diary and Correspondence of Henry, Earl of Clarendon, ed. S. W. Singer (1828), i. 165.

²V, 2414 (xx) ; VI, 2962 (xxv).

³Burnet, ii. 137-8.

⁴Ibid. Hardwicke's note.

⁵Supplement to Burnet's Own Time, p. 406. Cf. Own Time, ii. 138 :

William ' entered upon-solemn and serious resolutions of becoming, in all

things, an exact and an exemplary Christian '. Mary refers to Elizabeth

Villiers in her meditation for 1691. Doebner, pp. 42-3.

⁶Clarke and Foxcroft, Burnet, pp. 217-8.

⁷Mar. 21-31, 1687. MS, Rawl. C. 983, fol. jn,